

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 207438 TOSEC 100353

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSCE-00 (ISO) R

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DRAFTED BY S/S-O:DMACK:WLT

APPROVED BY S/S-O:DMACK

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 207438 TOSEC 100353

FOLLOWING REPEAT LISBON 5044 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO BONN  
LONDON MADRID MOSCOW PARIS ROME STOCKHOLM NATO DIA USCINCEUR  
DTD 30 AUG  
QUOTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 5044

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: AZEVEDO PRIME MINISTER; GONCALVES ARMED FORCES

CHIEF

REF: LISBON 5043 DTG 292100Z AUG 75

SUMMARY: PRESIDENCY ANNOUNCED DECISION AUGUST 29 (A) NAMING  
ADMIRAL PINHEIRO DE AZEVEDO TO BE PRIME MINISTER; (B) MOVING  
GONCALVES TO KEY POSITION OF CHIEF OF STAFF OF ARMED FORCES;  
(C) AND CONVOKING AFM ASSEMBLY FOR SEPTEMBER 5 TO RESTRUCTURE  
REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL. ANTUNES GROUP AND OTELO STRONGLY  
RESISTED MOVE; THOUGHT THEY HAD CONVINCED PRESIDENT AND  
AZEVEDO: BUT IN END WERE DISREGARDED. ALTHOUGH GONCALVES  
HAS BEEN OUSTED FROM PRIME MINISTERSHIP, THIS IS LITTLE  
MORE THAN AN OPTICAL ILLUSION. COMMUNISTS AND THEIR  
SUPPORTERS PRAISING DECISION AS DEFINITIVE SOLUTION TO  
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PAGE 02 STATE 207438 TOSEC 100353

CURRENT CRISIS. OPPOSITION TO GONCALVES AND HIS COMMUNIST

SUPPORTERS HAS BEEN DEALT SERIOUS BLOW. END SUMMARY.

1. OFFICE OF PRESIDENCY ISSUED COMMUNIQUE AT 10:40 P.M.

AUGUST 29:

--NAMING ADM PINHEIRO DE AZEVEDO PRIME MINISTER.

--NAMING GONCALVES CHIEF OF STAFF OF ARMED FORCES.

--CONVOKING AFM GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR SEPTEMBER 5 TO  
CONSIDER RESTRUCTURING OF REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL.

2. DECISION REFLECTED IN COMMUNIQUE CAME AFTER TWO  
DAYS OF VIRTUAL AROUND THE CLOCK DELIBERATIONS BY MEMBERS  
OF THE RULING DIRECTORATE AND THE COUNCIL OF THE  
REVOLUTION MINUS THE MELO ANTUNES NINE. SCENARIO WAS AS  
FOLLOWS:

3. MARATHON MEETING AUST 28-29 PRODUCED TENTATIVE  
SOLUTION. AT 2A.M. TENTATIVE AGREEMENT WAS REACHED.  
ONLY COPCON COMMANDER GEN. OTELO SRAVIA DE CARVALHO HELD OUT  
AGAINST MOVE OF GONCALVES TO CHIEF OF STAFF POSITION; OTELO  
PROPOSED DIRECTOR OF ENGINEER CORPS AS ALTERNATIVE. OTELO ARGUED  
THAT GONCALVES WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTED BY THE ARMED FORCES AND  
THAT HIS CONINUED PRESENCE IN SUCH MAJOR POSITION WOULD BE  
DIVISIVE. AIR FORCE CHIEF MORAIS E SILVA ABSTAINED GIVING AS  
REASON HIS IMPENDING RETIREMENT.

--BETWEEN TWO AND FIVE A.M. AUGUST 29, MEMBERS OF  
MELO ANTUNES GROUP URGED PINEHEIRO DE AZEVEDO NOT TO  
ACCEPT PRIME MINISTERSHIP. ANTUNES GROUP ARGUED THAT GONCALVES  
AS CHIEF OF STAFF AND EXCLUSION OF NINE FROM DECISION WOULD  
ENSURE FAILURE OF NEW GOVERNMENT UNDER AZEVEDO.

4. MEANWHILE, OTELO AND FABIAO WERE TAKING SOUNDINGS AMONG  
UNITS RE ACCEPTABILITY OF GONCALVES AS CHIEF OF STAFF. LATE  
AFTERNOON AUGUST 29 THEY MET WITH REGIONAL COMMANDERS CHARAIS  
AND PEZARAT CORREIA AND KEY TROOP COMMANDERS IN LISBON AREA.  
REPORTS FROM VARIOUS UNITS WERE DISCUSSED. SOUNDING REFLECTED  
STRONG ANTI-GONCALVES SENTIMENT.

5. UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORTS WERE MADE EARLY AFTERNOON AUGUST 29 TO  
CONVINCE FABIAO TO RECONSIDER HIS DECISIO NOT TO TAKE ON  
PRIME MINISTERSHIP. GROUP OF NINE, LED BY ANTUNES, CALLED ON  
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PAGE 03 STATE 207438 TOSEC 100353

PRESIDENT SAME AFTERNOON IN ATTEMPT TO GET HIM TO RECONSIDER HIS  
SUPPORT FOR THE AZEVEDO-GONCALVES FORMULA. THEY LEFT  
FORMAL PROTEST STATEMENT NOTING THAT THEY HAD NOT BEEN INVITED  
TO PARTICIPATE IN DELIBERATIONS LEADING TO TENTATIVE DECISION  
DESPITE FACT THAT THEY HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN REINTEGRATING INTO  
RC BY DECISION OF DIRECTORATE. THEY REMINDED PRESIDENT THEY  
REPRESENTED SENTIMENTS OF 80 PERCENT OF THE ARMED FORCES. THEY  
CONCLUDED INTERVIEW BY DISASSOCIATING THEMSELVES FROM ANY

DECISIONS WHICH MIGHT BE TAKEN WITHOUT THEIR PARTICIPATION AND SPECIFICALLY FROM POSSIBLE DESIGNATION OF GONCALVES AS ARMED FORCES CHIEF OF STAFF.

6. ANTUNES GROUP AND OTELO CONTINUED EFFORTS ON INTO AFTERNOON AUGUST 29 TO TURN PRESIDENT AROUND. BY EARLY EVENING THEY THOUGHT THEY HAD WON. AT THAT POINT THEY THOUGHT THEY HAD BOTH PRESIDENT AND AZEVEDO CONVINCED. IT LOOKED LIKE GONCALVES WAS OUT ENTIRELY (SEE REFTEL).

7. BETWEEN NINE AND ELEVEN P.M. THE SITUATION TURNED AROUND AGAIN. THE PRESIDENT REFUSED TO MOVE FROM HIS SUPPORT OF THE ORIGINAL FORMULA; AZEVEDO STAYED WITH HIM. BRIG. CORVACHO'S UNEXPECTED RETURN TO OPORTO WHERE HE ADDRESSED POPULAR UNITY FRONT RALLY WAS ADVANCE WARNING THAT EFFORTS OF ANTUNES GROUP AND OTELO HAD FAILED.

COMMENT: ALTHOUGH GONCALVES HAS BEEN OUSTED FROM THE PRIME MINISTERSHIP, THIS IS LITTLE MORE THAN AN OPTICAL ILLUSION. THE PRESIDENT HAS CEDED TO HIM A MAJOR PERHAPS EVEN KEY, PORTION OF HIS OWN POWER. AZEVEDO, WHILE NOT A COMMUNIST, IS WEAK AND OWES HIS POSITION TO COMMUNIST-LINING SUBORDINATES WITHIN THE NAVY. (SEPTTEL ON AZEVEDO BIO FOLLOWS). THUS OVERALL SITUATION IS AS BAD AS IT WAS BEFORE, IF NOT WORSE. IT IS HARD FOR US TO OBJECT TO THE HIGHLY PRO-NATO AZEVEDO, AND GONCALVES CAN WORK AT PENETRATING THE MILITARY. REACTION OF COMMUNIST LINING PRESS HAS BEEN UNIFORMLY POSITIVE AND PCP AND IT'S SATELLITE MDP HAVE SUPPORTED THE MOVE. THE ANTUNES GROUP IS IN A STATE OF DISARRAY AND CLEARLY FEELS IT HAS LOST AN IMPORTANT BATTLE IF NOT THE WAR. (SEPTTEL ON REACTION AND PLANS OF ANTUNES GROUP FOLLOWS).

ONE OF FIRST RESULTS OF THIS CHANGE IS LIKELY TO BE RESURGENCE OF INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT ACTIVITY IN AZORES AND MADEIRA. AZORES INDEPENDENCE MOVE COULD BE TRIGGERED AND MADEIRA WOULD NOT BE CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 STATE 207438 TOSEC 100353

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CARLUCCI UNQUOTE  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRIME MINISTER, TOSEC, POLITICAL SITUATION, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 30 AUG 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** RowellE0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975STATE207438  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** O:DMACK:WLT  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 75 LISBON 5043  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** RowellE0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 01 MAY 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <01 MAY 2003 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <08 OCT 2003 by RowellE0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** AZEVEDO PRIME MINISTER; GONCALVES ARMED FORCES CHIEF  
**TAGS:** PINT, PGOV, PO, (AZEVEDO, JOSE PINHEIRO DE)  
**To:** SECRETARY  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006